

Minutes: Leesburg Planning Commission September 7, 2000

The Leesburg Planning Commission met on Thursday, September 7, 2000 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at 25 West Market Street, Leesburg, VA. Members present for this meeting were: Chairman G. Glikas, C. Cable, D. Kennedy, L. Werner, L. Schonberger and Councilmember K. Umstatt. Absent was K. Kearns. Staff members present were: Lee Phillips, Delane Parks, Brian Boucher, Kristie Lalire and Anne Marie Eaton.

MINUTES:

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes of July 20, 2000 with minor changes.

Motion: Kennedy
Second: Vaughan
Carried: 5-0

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes of August 3, 2000 with minor changes.

Motion: Kennedy
Second: Vaughan
Carried: 5-0

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes of August 10, 2000 with minor changes.

Motion: Kennedy
Second: Schonberger
Carried: 4-0 with Commissioner
Vaughan abstaining

PETITIONERS:

Claire Lawson, president of the Exeter Square Homeowners Association, came forward to speak regarding the rezoning application for 24 Church Street. She stated that during the past few years many have spent a great deal of time and effort trying to preserve the historic district. She stated that it is a tourist attraction and brings a great deal of revenue into the Town. Ms. Lawson stated that rezoning the Church Street property opens the door to rezoning of other historic property in the downtown.

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Ms. Lawson stated that the applicants claims that there is a shortage of office space in the Town is false and she presented the Commission with twelve listing of commercial space available within the Town.

Ms. Lawson stated that if the property is rezoned the parking situation will become even worse than it is now. She stated that the parking would greatly be reduced once the addition to the court complex is complete.

Mr. Mike Banzhoff, came forward to speak. He stated that he distributed a memo to staff and the Commission regarding the rezoning on Church Street. Mr. Banzhoff stated that according to the Town Plan this would be a perfect area for common courts to preserve the downtown. Mr. Banzhoff went over a set of plans with the Commission explaining his views on infill in the Town Plan.

Mr. Robert Sevila came forward to speak. Mr. Sevila stated that he is before the Commission to speak to two items on the agenda one is Airport Commerce Preliminary Subdivision Plat. He wanted to tell the Commission that the applicants have a very aggressive construction schedule. The land has been undeveloped for a long time and believes that it is an important piece of the Town's economic development goals.

Mr. Sevila presented pictures of the building and gave some information about the applicant and what would be going into the building. Mr. Sevila stated that the applicants are currently located in Herndon and would be moving the company to Leesburg. He stated that they are committed to saving as many trees as possible and preserve the property as much as possible.

Mr. Sevila stated that he would also like to address the common parking courts recommendation from the Commission to the Council. He stated that he represents Helen Carson who is the owner of the property. Mr. Sevila stated that there is a conflict between the Town Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Plan, which as the staff has stated discourages this type of development within a single-family development. However, Mr. Sevila would like to stress that in some cases it is appropriate to have this type of development within in a single-family development.

Mr. Sevila stated that he was on the Town Council when the Town incorporated the private courts into its regulations. He stated that as a design option, particularly for infill, especially in the historic downtown, he would think that retaining the option for private parking courts such as this are an essential ingredient for a Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to allow the greatest degree of flexibility to achieve the other goals in the Comprehensive Plan, the most important of which is that we want to achieve something very compatible with existing development plans within the downtown.

Mr. Sevila stated he does not believe that the Commission wants another public street intersection on South King Street. He believes that a discreet private drive going

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between two homes, leaving the homes virtually undistributed is the most desirable option. Mr. Sevila stated that this is the best option for all of the reasons listed in the memorandum that Mr. Banzhoff has given the Commission. He stated that it allows the Town to have the additional open space and a much smaller street with much less paving and most importantly it gives the Town the opportunity to create a buffer around all of the lots and save the trees.

Mr. Sevila encouraged the Commission to think about the people that will buy the lots, they will be left with the tab of maintaining there own streets, plowing and paving and doing all of the other things that the Town does for its tax payers within the Town.

Mr. John Higgins of South King Street came forward to speak. Mr. Higgins stated that the lot plans before the Commission were carefully constructed to show where the trees are on the lot and those trees will be preserved.

Mr. Higgins stated that also before the Commission is a proposal to eliminate private parking courts. He stated that the Commission still has the option of public driveways, which can be used to control infill.

COUNCILMANIC REPORT:

Councilmember Umstattd stated that she was happy to see Mr. Sevila speaking about the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence at a small ceremony out at the site at the end of Miller Drive last month.

Councilmember Umstattd also stated that there would be a Virginia Association of Planning District Commission's Geographical Information System Conference in October if any of the Commissioners are interested in attending.

Commissioner Cable asked if this conference was for staff as well. Councilmember Umstattd stated that it was. Commissioner Cable stated that she would be interested in attending, however, she would like to see staff attend so that the Town can begin to work on the maps that she has been requesting for some time.

PUBLIC HEARING:

ZOAM 005B3 – Minimum District Size:

Brian Boucher stated that the Amendment before the Commission is an example of rezoning action out running changes to the Zoning Ordinance based on the Town Plan. He stated that in the Town Plan there are certain areas designated as Community Commercial, which are intended for moderate size retail commercial uses that serve the Town residents. One area is along Edwards Ferry Road where the Walmart is

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located. He stated that the B-3 zoning district is intended to improve these commercial centers.

Mr. Boucher stated that an applicant has applied for a rezoning to B-3 for a couple of parcels that are about an acre in the Leesburg Park area. The problem is that these two lots are not adjacent to any other B-3 lots. That is a problem because the B-3 minimum district size is five acres.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

None

ZONING ITEMS

None

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ITEMS

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

COMMITTEE REPORTS